**Conferencing Guidelines for Writers**

1. Do not make apologies or explanations concerning your writing (e.g., I did not have much time).
2. Never tell your readers how you want them to respond. When you know how your audience has perceived your writing, then you might ask them how they think a different audience might respond.
3. Do ask specific questions if you know on what it is that you need feedback. For example, you might ask the group's opinion on whether you should cut a section or leave it.
4. Pay attention to what responders have to say and think about what might be behind it. Although what they say may be wrong in your mind, it still might point out a problem you should take seriously.
5. Listen openly to responses and take them in, but do not be made helpless by what is said. Remember that you are in charge of your own writing and you will decide for yourself what to do next with your piece.
6. Remember that responders are giving feedback on a piece of your writing, not on you as a person.
7. Remember that, even if your writing is based on personal experience, you are asking responders to react to the writing, not the experience or your feelings about it.

**Conferencing Guidelines for Responders**

1. Focus on the writer's work. Stay on task.
2. Point out and comment on ideas, words, and phrases which move you in some way or seem to have lots of energy.
3. React to the writing only, giving specific responses to specific parts. Do not make personal comments or ask personal questions about something you think might be based on the writer's real experience. If the writer wants to tell you about it, he or she will. Even so, the purpose of the peer conference is to focus on the writing.
4. Be sure to give an accurate account of what you understand the writer to be saying.
5. It is not necessary to evaluate. Writers will gain advice and guidance through the interaction between you and their words.
6. Avoid telling other group members how to feel and never quarrel with someone else’s reaction.
7. Try to understand other people’s perceptions, rather than staying locked into your own impressions. (There will always be some words or passages that you will not perceive as others do.)
8. Show appreciation for a writer’s work, ask about its contents, describe what you like about it, and refrain from making negative judgements.
9. Help writers to clarify their intentions for the work, but remember that it is not appropriate for you to try to "rewrite" someone else's work. The writer is the expert on each piece of writing.

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